

# Resource Guide

## IS A PRODUCT SAFE?

When you're shopping do you wonder if a product is safe? You can check and find information on product recalls and safety issues – from toys to cosmetics to fresh produce – at: [www.recalls.gov](http://www.recalls.gov)

Individual federal agencies monitor different products and offer advice, information and e-mail newsletters:

Prescription drugs, cosmetics, medical devices, many food products, and animal feed: Food and Drug Administration, [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

Fresh produce and crops: Department of Agriculture, [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov)

Toys, electronics, other products: Consumer Product Safety Commission, [www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)

## PREVENTING IDENTITY THEFT—IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU!

Identity theft, one of the fastest growing consumer scams in America, can devastate your credit and your life. The Attorney General's office (AGO) has ideas for preventing ID theft, step-by-step instructions on what to do if you are victim of identity theft. Visit [www.atg.wa.gov/ConsumerIssues/ID-Privacy](http://www.atg.wa.gov/ConsumerIssues/ID-Privacy). The Federal Trade Commission also has good information on computer security, identity theft and other consumer issues: [www.ftc.gov/bcp](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp)

The AGO often has free workshops on preventing identity theft, avoiding scams, and "shred-a-thons." Watch the newspaper, listen to local radio, or visit the website ([www.atg.wa.gov](http://www.atg.wa.gov)) for upcoming dates.

## CHECK ON A BUSINESS OR PROFESSIONAL LICENSE

The **Department of Licensing** website lets you search the status of business and professional licenses and offers support in starting a business: [www.dol.wa.gov/business](http://www.dol.wa.gov/business)

## HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE INFORMATION

The state **Department of Health** has a searchable health care provider database that lists licenses, disciplinary actions and suspensions. They also provide birth and death certificates, quality assurance information, health tips and alerts and emergency preparedness advice. Visit [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov) or call toll-free **800-525-0127**.

The **Home Care Quality Authority** provides assistance in finding an in-home care provider.

Visit [www.hcqa.wa.gov](http://www.hcqa.wa.gov) or call toll-free **866-580-HCQA (866-580-4272)**.

A new **Prescription Drug Discount Card** is now available to any Washington resident regardless of age or income.

This free card allows you to save up to 60% on generic drugs and 20% on brand-name drugs at hundreds of participating pharmacies around the state. You can enroll on-line at [www.rx.wa.gov](http://www.rx.wa.gov) or by calling **800-913-4146**.

Whether you need help finding an affordable insurance plan or prescription medicines, have questions about your current provider, or want information about preventing insurance fraud and abuse, you can contact the Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) Helpline. Visit [www.insurance.wa.gov/consumers/SHIBA\\_HelpLine](http://www.insurance.wa.gov/consumers/SHIBA_HelpLine) or call **800-562-6900**.

## BANKING, MORTGAGES, CREDIT, INVESTING AND OTHER FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Department of Financial Institutions provides extensive consumer education materials on financial fraud, investing, credit, and enforcement actions. They also maintain lists of financial and investment institutions, process consumer complaints, and offer financial literacy programs. Visit [www.dfi.wa.gov](http://www.dfi.wa.gov) or call toll-free **877-RING-DFI (877-746-4334)**. TDD 360-664-8126.

## HOW TO REACH REPRESENTATIVE DEB WALLACE

### Olympia Office:

401 John L. O'Brien Building  
Olympia, WA 98504  
360-786-7976

**Legislative Hotline:** 800-562-6000

**TDD:** 800-635-9993

### Vancouver Office:

108 SE 124th Ave  
Vancouver, WA 98684  
360-260-6110

**E-mail:** [Wallace.Deb@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Wallace.Deb@leg.wa.gov)

**Web:** <http://housedemocrats.wa.gov/members/wallace>

2008

# LEGISLATIVES PRIORITIES

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**STATE  
REPRESENTATIVE  
DEB WALLACE**



**17TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

## **A NOTE FROM REP. DEB WALLACE:**

Dear Neighbors,

As I prepare for my sixth legislative session I want you to know what an honor it is to serve you. Being your state representative is a responsibility that I take very seriously. The 2008 legislative session begins January 14 and lasts just 60 days. I am sending you this newsletter to let you know what I've been working on for the upcoming legislative session.

I've also included resources that may help answer questions you have in your day to day life. With the recent news stories of toy and food recalls, questionable charities and mortgage practices it's important to know where to turn when you have a problem. Many state and federal agencies offer a wealth of information to help us become better, more knowledgeable consumers. I hope you find this information helpful.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have specific concerns you would like to talk about. Best wishes to you and your family for a happy and prosperous new year!

Sincerely,

*Deb Wallace*

**★ ★ SAVE THE DATE ★ ★**

### **Town Hall**

**Join Rep. Wallace on January 19 to help set the agenda for the 2008 session!**

**When:** Saturday, January 19

**Time:** 11 am

**Where:** Firstenberg Community Center  
700 NE 136th Avenue in Vancouver

**★ CONSTITUENT SURVEY ★**

**Please visit my website to take my survey and tell me your thoughts!**

<http://housedemocrats.wa.gov/members/wallace>



# Representative Deb Wallace • 17th District

## 2008 PRIORITIES

I'd like your views on issues that I'm working on this session. Below are just a few highlights. If you'd like more information about these issues—or any others—please don't hesitate to contact me.



### PROPERTY TAXES

Property taxes are on everyone's mind. I will continue to advocate for common sense solutions for property tax relief. I'm also working to expand the exemption for seniors, people with disabilities, farmers and veterans with service connected disabilities.



### STOPPING THE METH EPIDEMIC

We've done a lot to stop the scourge of methamphetamine in our state but there is still more to be done. I've been working with local law enforcement to develop legislation to give longer sentences to meth related identity thieves.



### ENVIRONMENT

This year I visited and saw for myself the crumbling ice sheet and the thawing tundra in the arctic. Climate change is happening and working on practical solutions is not only possible but necessary. We are even identifying new economic opportunities for our region to provide for a healthier environment and economy.



*Rep. Wallace visits with students from Burton Elementary during their visit to Olympia.*



### EDUCATION

It's important that we educate more of Washingtonians to higher levels and expand access to post-high school opportunities through apprenticeships, on-the-job training, community and technical colleges and universities. As the chair of the Higher Education Committee I will keep pushing to make sure that these opportunities are available to everyone. To support themselves and their families more people in Washington State need post-high school education.

### TRANSPORTATION

I will continue to work to relieve congestion by making sure that projects already planned in Clark County stay in the budget and remain on time.



## NEED HELP BUT DON'T KNOW WHERE TO TURN?

People looking for help in our communities often don't know where to begin. Locating such basic resources as food, shelter, employment, or health care may mean calling dozens of phone numbers, then struggling through a maze of agencies and services to make the right connections. If you need health or human services information you can dial **211 (877-501-0252 from your cellular phone)** or visit **[www.211info.org](http://www.211info.org)** to be connected with services right here in Clark County.

## CONSUMER PROTECTION

Do you suspect that you are a victim of fraud? Did you purchase a lemon car that broke down half a mile from the lot? Are you still waiting on the refund you applied for six months ago?

The state Attorney General's Office (AGO) works to safeguard consumers from fraud and unfair business practices, such as vehicle warranty problems and utility issues. They also offer valuable advice on protecting oneself from identity theft, computer crimes, junk mail, and many other scams and issues. The AGO provides arbitration to mediate complaints between consumers and businesses at no cost to either party.

On average, two out of three complaints filed with the office are satisfactorily resolved.

**Call the toll-free consumer protection hotline:**

**800-551-4636**

**or visit [www.atg.wa.gov/SafeguardingConsumers.aspx](http://www.atg.wa.gov/SafeguardingConsumers.aspx)**

You can also contact the **Consumer Resource Center in Vancouver:**

1220 Main St, Suite 510

Vancouver, WA 98660

360-759-2100

## HELP FOR SENIORS, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES AND THEIR FAMILIES

Senior Information & Assistance is a free service run by the Southwest Washington Area Agency on Aging that acts as a main access point for a wide range of public and private resources that are available to seniors, disabled adults and their families. It's one-stop for information on home and health care options, medical and dental referrals, caregiving resources, information on housing, respite, support groups, transportation options, nutrition programs, and assistance with obtaining prescription medications. You can reach them at **360-694-8144** or **[www.helpingelders.org](http://www.helpingelders.org)**.

## VETERAN'S SERVICES

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs is a full-service state agency that assists veterans, their family members and survivors. The department is an advocate and a resource for veterans and their families. If you or your family has served our country you can call **800-562-2308** or visit **[www.dva.wa.gov](http://www.dva.wa.gov)** to be linked up with local, state and federal veteran's benefits.

## SAVING FOR A HIGHER EDUCATION

For a small amount each month you can open an account to prepay your child's or grandchild's college tuition, books and other higher education expenses. With Washington's Guaranteed Education Tuition Plan your account is guaranteed to keep pace with college tuition and you can use it at nearly any public or private college in the country. To get more information about the program or to start saving for your child or grandchild's future contact **800-955-2318** or go online to **[www.get.wa.gov](http://www.get.wa.gov)**.

## REPORTING LICENSE PLATE FRAUD

The State of Washington relies on businesses and citizens to voluntarily pay their fair share of taxes to fund state services. If you believe you've seen someone who has not properly registered their vehicles, boats or business in Washington, you can report this by calling **360-449-7975** or visiting **[www.wsp.wa.gov/reports/licfraud.htm](http://www.wsp.wa.gov/reports/licfraud.htm)**.

## INSURANCE ASSISTANCE

The **Office of the Insurance Commissioner** offers complaint forms, lists of authorized insurers, health insurance benefits information, disciplinary orders, and information on illegal insurance plans. Visit **[www.insurance.wa.gov](http://www.insurance.wa.gov)** or call the Consumer Advocacy office at **800-562-6900**, TDD 360-586-0241.

## CHECK BEFORE YOU GIVE

Many valuable charities need support, but a few bad organizations abuse good-hearted generosity for fraud. To check on the status of charities and find tips, visit **[www.secstate.wa.gov/charities](http://www.secstate.wa.gov/charities)** or call toll-free **800-332-GIVE**.

## "DO NOT CALL" REGISTRY

The national "Do Not Call" registry cuts back on telephone solicitations and telemarketers. To sign up, call **888-382-1222** from the number you want blocked or visit **[www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)**